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*by Page 11. et seq.
The Rev. Edward Hawkins
Jr. H. H. H.*

SPEECH

OF

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

SIR HOWARD DOUGLAS,

BART., G. C. B.,

(MEMBER FOR LIVERPOOL),

ON

MR. C. BULLER'S MOTION

RESPECTING

GOVERNMENT COLONIZATION,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

APRIL 6, 1843.

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S P E E C H.

SIR, — Finding that very extravagant expectations are entertained, that a gigantic system of colonization may be adopted to such an extent as to prove an immediate remedy for the very general distress which prevails in this country, by abstracting large masses of unemployed labour, and transplanting it to the colonies, where, as is supposed, it may be absorbed into masses of employed labour; and knowing on my own experience, that such an extensive scheme, suddenly carried out, would prove fallacious and abortive, I came down, prepared to follow the hon. Member, the mover of this resolution, to state my views on the progress and prospects of colonization and the extent to which this might be safely prosecuted. But after the very able and comprehensive exposition made by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I shall lay aside this mass of documents with which I was prepared to enter fully into this question, and at this late hour of the night, I shall confine myself to a few general observations. I con-

cur generally in the opinion stated by the hon. Gentleman the mover of this resolution, as to the temporary causes of the prevailing distress in this country; but not so, as to the main cause. I believe that the distress in which the working classes of this country are involved, is principally occasioned by the active competition of foreign nations in manufacturing industry, by which the value of British labour has been greatly depressed, in relation to the value of foreign labour, and the condition of the labouring classes of this country thereby greatly deteriorated in the scale of comfort. I agree with the hon. Mover in this, that the field for the consumption of British goods, has become restricted; but I assert, that the restriction is not owing to us, but to foreign nations who persist in refusing to receive our productions, although we do receive, far more freely, theirs. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, still contend that foreign nations would receive our commodities freely, if we did so with respect to theirs. But, as it is of importance that this vain expectation should be completely set at rest, I am prepared here by official documents and proofs, this once and for all, to establish the contrary. I have, upon former occasions, asserted that the foreign nations to which I advert, will neither relax nor abolish their systems, but on the contrary, that their tariffs are becoming more and more stringent. I might from these, were it not at so late an hour, explain fully the French commercial policy, and most particularly that extraordinary system of commercial legislation, a sort of commercial Parliament, constituted throughout France, and centralised in Paris, to which

all alterations in commercial policy are submitted, before they are proposed to the legislative chambers, and which, accounting for much that we see, forms an influence too strong for any Government, or for the legislative chambers to contend with, in favour of free-trade. I might, with these materials, show likewise the stringency of the United States' system, and that no abandonment or material relaxation in our favour will be made there. I admit, that they may abate something of the stringency of their late Tariff; but that will be to make it more, and not less efficient in favour of their own manufacturing system, because excessive duties bring smuggling into play. I will here just briefly mention an insidious principle of protection in the United States' Tariff, which those hon. Gentlemen opposite, who ought to be very conversant with it, do not appear to have discovered. It is this, that exclusive of the very high *ad valorem* duties levied on the importation of our manufactures, there is an arbitrary rating of the value by which the real duty is enormously enhanced. With respect to our cottons, for instance, several qualities and descriptions of different real values are clasped together; but the duty is paid upon the whole, as if they were all of the value of the highest, and in this way our low priced articles have not the benefit of their low price, in the application of the duty, and in fact, I believe in some cases, pay 100 or 150 per cent on the value. I might show the like of other rival nations. Thus the wall which the hon. Member for Sheffield spoke of the other night, as one that we were building against foreign nations, is, on the contrary, a circumvallation.

tion which foreign nations are building against us. We have long been endeavouring by indications and advances on our part, to lower it; but in proportion as we do this, they back it up, and raise it. So that, this assertion with respect to the wall, and the assertion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and other hon. Gentlemen opposite upon this subject, are quite the reverse of being correct. Foreign competition, and foreign restriction, are therefore the causes of those limitations, in wonted fields, for the encouragement of British industry; these are the main causes of the existing distress, and we must seek compensation for this, elsewhere. I congratulate the hon. Member on the very just and magnificent exposition which he has given of the vast value and importance of the colonial trade, and consequently of the colonial system, in connection with his motion for extensive colonization. Nothing can be more convincing than the very able statement which he has made, taking colony by colony, and class by class, of the great value of our colonial, compared with our foreign trade, and of the immensely greater consumption of British goods in British colonies, than in foreign countries. This is indeed a powerful appeal in favour of the colonial system, which I have frequently endeavoured to advocate. But in any attempt to multiply or extend these advantages by colonization, the great object should be to take especial care that no more labour be abstracted from the unemployed mass at home, than can be immediately and permanently absorbed into the masses of employed labour in the colo-

nies. If this should be overdone, great disappointment and suffering must be inflicted upon all those poor or distressed persons, who may have been sent out of this country without regard to the actual state of industry, in the colony to which they had proceeded. Suppose this House were to adopt, forthwith, a system of colonization on a scale so extensive as to relieve the distress of the labouring population by removing so large a portion of it, as might do something like restore the balance between the demand for, and supply of labour, what guarantee will hon. Gentlemen opposite give, that the poor people so sent out of the country would find permanent employment in the colonies, and so better their condition? The only guarantee we could give, is, steadiness in our commercial policy, and in our commercial regulations, by which only the industry of the people in their new spheres, can be so protected, and kept active, as to afford them permanent employment. I beg then to ask the hon. Member, the mover of this resolution, if he is not an advocate for free-trade; and if so, whether his free-trade principles, if carried out, would tend to ensure to the new colonists permanent employment, prosperity and an improved condition? I ask all the hon. Members opposite whether the promised benefits of colonization be consistent with their principles. Why, if the Corn-laws were totally and entirely repealed, the trade of Canada with this country in agricultural produce and provisions, notwithstanding the enlightened policy of the right hon. Baronet to treat the Canadas as integral parts of the British empire, would be completely destroy-

ed. Our supplies would be obtained from countries nearer home; or any that might come from America would be sent from the sea-ports of the United States. Then, with respect to timber, if this article were bought cheap without regard to the country of origin growth or production, or to the nationality of the vessels that import it, what would become of the British North American timber and shipping trade? Why the adoption of the principles of free-trade would effectually destroy those two staple branches of industry, in which only extensive emigration to those colonies could find employment; and so render useless those boundless spaces as receptacles for our encroaching and surplus population, and which contribute moreover so much to the wealth and power of the British empire. Then with respect to the means of providing for the expence of sending out emigrants to and locating them in the colonies. I speak particularly of British North America. There is a very general opinion entertained, that the proceeds of the sale of Crown lands afford Government the means of promoting this. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, has corrected this erroneous impression, in having stated that the Crown has no land to sell there. The whole of it has been alienated; but I must explain, with the permission of the House, the history of this economy, and I request the attention of the hon. Member for Montrose to it, because he has had a great share in bringing this difficulty about. And what I am to say will prove that pecuniary economy may very often be pushed so far in national policy as to become political prodigality. In consequence of the indispo-

sition of this House to provide for the charges of the colonial civil lists, these were many years ago, withdrawn, from the Parliamentary estimates. This, with respect to New Brunswick, was announced to me in 1825, and I was directed to call upon the local Legislature to make that provision. I declined to do this, for strong and, as I thought, sufficient reasons. I think a person is not fit for such a situation as I then held, who hesitates to act thus, under a strong sense of the objections that may appear to him to be valid upon the spot, and with the most ample local knowledge and experience. I represented that a civil list could not be called for, without carrying out the terms of the arrangement, viz.—a surrender of the hereditary properties and revenues of the Crown, to the Legislature, in return for the civil list: that thus, all the Crown, or its representative, had to depend upon, would be alienated for a very trifling sum; that the colonial governors and governments would become dependent on the local legislatures, and the settlement of the country likewise; that the control and responsibility over the governor, would be transferred from Downing-street and Parliament, to the colonial legislatures, and the Queen's representative thus become dependant upon them. My objections were admitted; the civil list for my province was restored, throughout my administration, to the Parliamentary estimate: but long since has this sad measure been generally carried out. I predicted the consequences; I forbear at present to pursue them. It is sufficient to say that not one inch of land has the Crown to dispose of in that group of colo-

mes. And the funds derived from the sale of lands in Australia, are, I believe, entirely exhausted. From what sources then, are to come funds, to defray the expense of sending out vast numbers of emigrants, either to British North America or to Australia, according to an extensive system of colonization? I can answer for the evils of the early systems of emigration, or rather of the absence of all system, as shown by the noble Lord the Secretary of the Colonies. I was in America at the time the schemes of 1825 and 1826 were undertaken, as a measure of relief to this country, and by which vast number of destitute, squalid emigrants, were landed upon our quays, in the condition which that noble Lord has depicted. I then established those emigrant and agricultural societies, saving-banks, and adopted other arrangements necessary for the better regulation and encouragement of emigration. I beg here to advert to the question of tenure, of which the noble Lord, the Member for Sunderland, has spoken. In order to defray the charges of the passage and location of emigrants, they were made to enter into engagements to repay, by the proceeds of their labour, the expense of transport; and with respect to land, to engage to pay a quit rent to the Crown, until they should pay the price put upon the land, and the expense of the grant. I objected to this as a dangerous tenure. 1st. That emigrants so sent out, would migrate into the United States, to avoid payment of passage money; and that all who might settle under these conditions, as renters to the Crown, would never pay, but on processes at the suit of the Crown. That the principle of making the

governed, the debtor of the Government, was obviously, anywhere objectionable, reversing the principle which, as in the funding system, by making the governed, the creditors of the Government, gives each, by so much, an interest in the stability of the Government. These considerations put an end to that scheme of tenure. But I believe there is something like it still existing. I must now beg leave to make a few observations respecting succours, and aids, and comforts, and consolations, that should be provided, not only to attend an extended system of colonization, but even in the existing settlements, where these are greatly deficient, as appear by the papers I hold in my hand. Spiritual aid, religious instruction, and that organization of the Church, which is imperfect without episcopal government and rule, demand succour. And here I advert, with pain and regret, to that pernicious, and most unholy act of a former Government, which, some years ago, withdrew from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the Parliamentary grant, by which that society was enabled to provide, to a considerable extent, for the Church in the colonies; but which it is not now in its power to do. The venerable society is disabled from keeping faith, as they declare in a late appeal, with missionaries already sent out, far less to provide for fresh endowments. Nothing can exceed the devoted zeal, efficiency, and important services rendered by the missionaries that have been so sent out to the colonies. I could mention many instances of this, and of the difficulties, the privations, and even of the dangers to which they are

frequently exposed, and encounter, in the discharge of their holy duties. I wish the House would permit me to state one fact illustrative of this. Visiting an inland district, bordering on an extensive lake, and having attended divine worship in a settlement on its shore, I crossed in the afternoon to another settlement, taking with me the missionary who had officiated. I learned from him, that his district comprehended all the settlements around the lake, and on the rivers falling into it. That he served four churches; did the parochial duties and attended to the schools, at four distant parts of that wide space; doing these duties in turn, so that each church and settlement was only served every fourth Sunday. The missionary had provided himself a boat for these duties; and the settlers manned her gratuitously, to carry him to the different points. Finding that he had for many years been charged with these duties, I asked whether he had not experienced great inconvenience and difficulty in crossing the lake in stormy seasons, and in winter? He replied that he had; that it was very perilous to him, and prejudicial to the settlement, that there should not be a missionary on each side of the lake; but that the society had not been able to comply with a requisition that had been made for an additional missionary in that quarter. That on one occasion, having urged the settlers, who formed his crew, beyond their discretion, to take him across the lake, the boat was upset in a squall; the missionary succeeded in reaching the boat, and, clinging to her for about ten hours, drifted to the lea side of the lake, and so was most providentially preserved.

The crew were all drowned ! I may truly say, of my own knowledge, that but for the instrumentality of this society, vast numbers of settlers, members of the Church of England, must pass from the cradle to the grave, without the blessings and the benefits, and the consolations, of the religion they profess, according to the forms and faith of the national Church. With respect to the endowment of the bishopric of New Brunswick, I advert with great satisfaction to the intention announced by the noble Lord the Member for London, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, to advise her Majesty to found a bishopric in the province of New Brunswick, on the grounds, that the Roman Catholic Church is fully organised in that province, in this respect, and so is the Church of Scotland ; and that it does not seem appropriate that Members of the Church of England, in considerable numbers, should either be under the superintendence of a bishop residing at a great distance, or be left entirely to voluntary contribution, in this essential matter. For these reasons, thus admirably expressed, the noble Lord proposed to advise her Majesty to erect New Brunswick into a separate diocese, with a grant of 600*l.* a-year in aid of other funds, and without which grant it was made evident to the noble Lord that this bishopric could not be founded. This intention, I hope and trust will yet be carried out. I refer to it with great satisfaction, and I can assure the noble Lord, the Member for the City of London, that the intentions which he thus announced has ensured to his Lordship the grateful acknowledgments of that portion of British North America, to which this measure relates.

In other respects, likewise, there is a great want of spiritual aid in British North America, occasioned by want of funds to enable the Society for the propagation of the Gospel to provide for missionaries; and I can assure the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that until these most necessary and essential requisites be supplied for religious worship, and for religious and moral education in connection with the national Church, which are greatly wanting in many of the settled districts of British North America, and which ought to be considered, too, an essential provision that should attend any system of colonization; until these be abundantly carried out—colonization will be discouraged, and the moral and religious improvement of the settlers by the Church be abandoned. I hold in my hand answers, published officially under the authority of the colonial office in reply to the question, "Is there a clergyman in each of the settled districts?" which answers state that many of the settled districts throughout the whole of British North America, are destitute of clergymen of the Church of England. And it likewise appears, by answers, given to questions which persons intending to emigrate, are most likely to put, next to that which relates to their spiritual well-being, that there is great want of hospitals, infirmaries, benefit societies, and funds for the relief of the destitute. New Brunswick may boast, I believe, of more of these institutions, than any of the other provinces, in proportion to her population. In Prince Edward's Island, there are no such institutions. In both Canadas there are several, but more are wanted; and

for any extended system of colonization, must be greatly enlarged. And this leads me to recommend, most urgently, that there is probably nothing more important than to provide medical and surgical aid and dispensaries for medicine, in new settled districts at the public expense, or from some such fund or other. Hon. Members who have never visited new settlements, or witnessed the uncommon difficulties and dangers, and accidents to which the first settler, the pioneer of cultivation, is exposed, cannot conceive to what sufferings they are exposed in these undertakings, from diseases incidental to labour and exposure, in the virgin forest; to accidents in felling timber, and in, at first, the unskilled use of the axe. I could mention many terrible instances of this, which I have witnessed, when no medical, surgical, or medicinal aid were within reach. Nothing then is so important, to the physical well-being of the emigrants, as that medical and surgical aid should be provided, for the first periods of a settlement, at the public charge. The professional persons so sent out, might, when the settlement became organised, and prosperous, become practitioners at the charge of the settlers by degrees, and the first allowances, provided by some public fund, might gradually terminate. We have societies for providing charities, and succours of every description at home, and in foreign parts. I know none so much needed, as a society for providing medical and surgical aid for first settlers in colonies. How many half-pay military and naval surgeons might not thus be employed. I mention all these cir-

circumstances, and accessaries, not to discourage, but to animate and provide for a good system of colonization, and I state the difficulties that the settler may have to encounter, and the means, circumstances, and conditions, and terms on which the success of an extensive system of colonization depends, that we may be careful. I shall say no more on this occasion, and at this late hour, than that I shall vote against the amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Rochdale; and, though I admire and approve very much of what the hon. Mover has stated, yet I concur generally in what has been so ably stated by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

